

law school and the next day walk into a courtroom and try a death penalty case or graduate medical school and immediately walk into an operating room to perform open-heart surgery. Those professions require decades of training post-graduation. Teaching is an equally complex profession, melding academic theory and practice, and carries enormous responsibility for children's personal and our Nation's collective economic future.

But too many teachers are thrown into a classroom with their own students, many with complex social, emotional, and learning needs, without sufficient training or support. And too many leave the profession feeling frustrated, defeated, and disheartened. Studies have shown a connection between support in the first year and teachers' moving between schools and leaving the profession. A helpful mentor, as reported by teachers, significantly reduces the chances of quitting in the first year. Common planning time and collaboration with other teachers are strong predictors of teachers' decisions to stay in a school and the profession.

The higher education amendments will improve teacher quality, training, and retention by promoting high-quality and effective teacher preparation programs for new and prospective teachers, and help high-need schools by focusing on recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers in high-need schools.

The bill creates competitive grants for innovative teacher preparation programs that address the need for stronger teaching methods and better teacher support. The bill provides a competitive grant for college level preparation programs that include evidence-based teaching methods, mentoring programs for the teacher's first 2 years in service—called induction programs—and new accountability measures to allow programs to improve the training offered.

The bill also provides grants to teaching residency programs, programs that provide participants a 1-year stipend to engage in a guided teaching apprenticeship with a master teacher that integrates theory and practice and includes master's degree coursework. These residency programs must place participants in high-needs schools and work with local school districts to develop an induction program to provide continued support to residents once the program ends. These programs must also contain accountability measures methods that allow for program evaluation and improvement.

I want to express my gratitude to Senators KENNEDY and ENZI and the rest of my colleagues on the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee for all their hard work and leadership in bringing such a comprehensive and innovative bill to the floor.

Mr. President, I first ran for elected office in my home State of Maryland at

the age of 22. I sought elected office because I believed that government can make a difference in people's lives. This bill, reauthorizing the Higher Education Act of 1965, does just that, and I am proud to offer my support.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, due to the delay of my flight from Rhode Island, I was unavoidably absent for vote No. 273, the Brown amendment to create a new Federal Supplemental Loan program.

Had I been present, I would have supported the Brown amendment No. 2376. We know that more and more students are taking out private loans with high interest rates. Senator BROWN's amendment seeks to provide an alternative for those students who have exhausted their grant and Stafford loan aid and continue to need assistance in meeting their college cost of attendance. I have heard concern that such a program could provide a disincentive to States to provide additional grant aid, but I believe we must address the fact that too many moderate- and low-income students take out high interest private loans, which creates an unmanageable loan burden for these students and their families. The Brown amendment is an attempt to rectify this situation and although not perfect, it is worthy of inclusion in the committee's deliberation.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, what is the pending order of business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending amendment is the Kennedy second-degree amendment to the Coburn amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 2377

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to return to the amendment I filed earlier.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The amendment is now pending.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask the Chair if there is a pending second-degree amendment by the Senator from Iowa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is.

Mr. DURBIN. I would say to the Chair, for those Members following, there has been agreement reached, and there will be no objection to the adoption of the second-degree amendment to my amendment and then the adoption of my amendment, both by voice vote.

So at this point, I urge the adoption of the second-degree amendment offered by the Senator from Iowa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the amendment is agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2380) was agreed to.

Mr. DURBIN. Now, Mr. President, I urge adoption of the Durbin amendment, as amended by the second-degree amendment of the Senator from Iowa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the amendment, as amended, is agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2377), as amended, was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2381

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask to return to the pending business before I make my unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate resumes consideration of S. 1642 in the morning, July 24, no amendments other than those in this agreement be in order; that there be 20 minutes of debate time remaining, divided as follows: 10 minutes each for Senators KENNEDY and ENZI; upon the use of that time, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the Kennedy second-degree amendment, No. 2387; that upon disposition of the Kennedy amendment, if the Kennedy amendment is agreed to, then it be in order for Senator COBURN to offer a further second-degree amendment on the same subject; that there be 2 minutes of debate prior to a vote in relation to the Coburn second-degree amendment, if offered, with the time equally divided and controlled in the usual form; that upon disposition of the Coburn second-degree amendment, there be 2 minutes for debate, equally divided, prior to a vote in relation to the Coburn amendment No. 2369, as amended; that upon disposition of the Coburn amendment No. 2369, as amended, if amended, the committee substitute amendment, as amended, be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; the bill be read a third time, and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill without further intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent we proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, tomorrow we will celebrate the first increase in the minimum wage in 10

years—in 10 years. That will be the first increase in the minimum wage. It will be increased to \$5.85 an hour, followed by an additional 70 cents one year later, and an additional 70 cents one year after that.

This will mean new hope and opportunity for 13 million men and women. Primarily women, because almost 60 percent of minimum wage workers are women. It will benefit some 6.4 million children because more than half of the women who will benefit from the increase have children. So it will benefit the children. This means hope is on the way.

It has been a long time, Mr. President. We have heard those who say: Well, the increase in the minimum wage is going to cost jobs, and it will work a hardship on these people. Of course, that is what they have said on every increase there has been. This is the 10th increase in the minimum wage, and they have been wrong each and every time. Currently, the second largest economy in Western Europe is Great Britain—they are paying \$10.97 as a minimum wage. They have lifted almost a million children out of poverty. At the present time, Ireland also has one of the strongest economies in Western Europe and their minimum wage is \$11.25 an hour, and they have the strongest economy in all of Western Europe. They have reduced child poverty by 40 percent, and their economy is strong. So \$5.85 in this great country at this time is just a statement that many of us believe that work should pay, and that people who work 40 hours a week, 52 weeks of the year, should not live in poverty.

So tomorrow will be an important day, Mr. President, and it is appropriate that the Senate be reminded of it.

VOTE-ARAMAS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, last Thursday night, in an embarrassing display, the Senate engaged in the perennial and painfully ridiculous budget vote-arama.

This is the process where the Senate considers either a budget resolution or reconciliation bill, and, under the rules of the Budget Act, Senators are permitted to offer and secure votes on amendments after the statutory limitation on debate has expired. By consent, Senators are usually allocated 2 minutes to describe their positions for and against an amendment before the Senate votes. Because Senators are not required to file their amendments in advance, far too often, Senators cannot read an amendment before a rollcall vote begins. We cannot even get an inkling of some of the mischief contained in many of these amendments. Many times, the amendments being considered would require sweeping changes to current law, and Senators are forced to cast their votes on these complex matters without the benefit of debate, an understanding of the costs, or even the

chance to peek at the text of the amendment.

In recent years, the budget vote-arama has come to signify an absolute breakdown in the deliberations of the U.S. Senate. The vote-arama is a degrading process that sullies the reputation of the Senate every time it occurs. I can only imagine, and I cringe at the thought of, how the Senate must appear to the American people, voting on matters without debate, and without even something as simple as a copy of the amendment.

Last Thursday night, during the debate on the Higher Education Access Act, the so-called education reconciliation bill, the process deteriorated even further, into something appalling. The Senate fell into a political tit-for-tat, with Senators offering, at first, an unrelated amendment regarding the Federal Communications Commission, and then a sense-of-the-Senate resolution regarding the detainees at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and then an unrelated amendment to alter the collective bargaining rights of American workers. The free-for-all further deteriorated when an amendment was offered urging the President not to pardon the Vice President's former Chief of Staff, I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, and then a retaliatory amendment was offered regarding the pardons granted by President Clinton. And on it went.

Amendment after amendment was offered, each completely unrelated to the education bill before the Senate, and subject to multiple violations under the Budget Act. And, yet, each side continued to raise the stakes, taking political shots at the opposing side, while the Senate suffered through a humiliating night of political ping-pong. Cooler heads finally prevailed, thanks to the intervention of the majority leader, and, at least, the amendments regarding Presidential pardons were withdrawn. Nevertheless, the soap opera of last Thursday night underscores the dangers of the budget reconciliation process—where bills are considered under expedited procedures, where debate is almost nonexistent, where vote-aramas occur, and where Senators are called upon to cast votes on nearly anonymous amendments that amount to little more than colorful sloganeering.

The spectacle also underscored the absolute necessity of the Byrd Rule. Section 313 of the Budget Act—the Byrd Rule—prevents extraneous matter from being added to reconciliation bills, and being jammed through the Senate on party-line votes, like the ones we saw last Thursday night. The Byrd Rule was designed to prevent passage of exactly the kind of amendments that were being offered.

As the hours ticked by, I believe that many Members were embarrassed by the performance of the Senate, as it got dragged into a political game of tossing zingers. In hindsight, we have to admit that matters got carried away, and that this body drifted far

from its constitutional responsibility to legislate for the American people, and not the political media. Last Thursday night, the Senate displayed an utter lack of seriousness and appreciation for the depth and complexity of the issues before this country. I opposed every amendment that violated the Byrd Rule—regardless of whether it was offered by a Republican or Democrat, and regardless of how I viewed the subject matter—because I was so appalled by the deterioration in the Senate's deliberative processes. I can say honestly that I took no part in the message-mongering amendments that were extraneous to the underlying bill, and that showed this institution in such a shameful light.

Last Thursday night's spectacle ought to cause every Senator to re-evaluate the budget process in the U.S. Senate. I will renew my efforts to do away with these pernicious vote-aramas, and I hope my colleagues will join me in that effort.

REFUGEE CRISIS IN IRAQ ACT

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, yesterday's Washington Post included details from a memo by our Ambassador to Iraq, Ryan Crocker, in which he makes a strong case that we need to do more to make it possible for Iraqis employed by our government to come to the United States.

Ambassador Crocker emphasizes the growing danger facing these Iraqis, who as he states "work under extremely difficult conditions, and are targets for violence including murder and kidnapping." According to the article, Ambassador Crocker has called for establishment of an immigrant visa program for these Iraqi employees.

In fact, Senators SMITH, BIDEN, HAGEL, LIEBERMAN, LEAHY, LEVIN, and I have introduced legislation which establishes a program to do precisely what Ambassador Crocker calls for.

Our legislation establishes an immigrant visa program for Iraqis who have worked for or directly with the United States government for at least 1 year. Our Government now provides such special immigrant visas but only for Iraqi and Afghan translators and interpreters. Our bill expands it to include Iraqis in other professions who have been employed by us or who have worked directly with us.

In addition, our legislation creates additional options for Iraqis who are under threat because of their close association with the United States to apply to our refugee resettlement program.

The Senate is obviously divided on the best overall policy to pursue on the war. I thought it was a mistake from the beginning. That is no secret. Some of our colleagues are convinced that continuing the use of military force in Iraq is necessary to protect our national security.

But our divisions on that issue should not obscure the fact that all of